

405. Memorandum From the President's Assistant for National Security Affairs (Clark) to President Reagan¹

Washington, November 1, 1982

SUBJECT

Secretary Shultz's Memo on the U.N. Falkland Resolution

Issue

Secretary Shultz has sent you a memorandum (Tab C) recommending we support an Argentine-sponsored U.N. resolution calling for negotiations to resolve the Falkland Islands dispute.

Facts

The resolution, which has wide Latin American support,² will be voted on at the U.N. next week. Our support for any such resolution has been contingent on its being moderate in tone and not prejudging the outcome. The Argentine Foreign Minister has now accepted our key demands.³ Although the British will be disappointed with a U.S. vote favoring any resolution, Secretary Shultz believes US-UK cooperation in other areas will not be affected.

¹ Source: Reagan Library, Roger W. Fontaine Files, [Falklands Nov 1–November 14, 1982]. Confidential. Sent for action. Drafted by Fontaine. McFarlane initialed the memorandum on behalf of Clark. McFarlane also drew an arrow from his initials to the top right-hand corner of the memorandum and wrote "Fontaine."

² In telegram 3119 from USUN, October 29, the Mission reported that on October 28, representatives of the Governments of Peru, Argentina, Mexico, Ecuador, and Brazil met with Kirkpatrick, on behalf of the UN resolution's 20 Latin American sponsors, "to request (A) A U.S. vote in favor of the Falklands resolution, (B) U.S. good offices to persuade the British to forego amendments and keep the parliamentary situation in the UNGA Plenary as simple as possible." The Mission also summarized the conversation that followed: "They explained and emphasized their conviction that the U.S. vote would have a large effect in healing or exacerbating U.S. relations with Latin America. Amb. Kirkpatrick assured them she understood their views but noted that the U.S. position was not yet decided; and said she had found the British to be strongly opposed to any resolution that proposes negotiations. The Ambassador stated that, while she would be very happy to raise the Latin concerns with the British, she was not optimistic that we would have any influence." (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820562–0058)

³ Garcia del Solar presented to Bosworth on October 30 a revised text of the resolution that omitted "offensive language on colonialism," as well as "objectionable references to the Non-Aligned Movement declarations," and added three new paragraphs on the cessation of hostilities, non-use of force, and the interests of the Islanders. The changes were transmitted by the Department in telegram 306086 to USUN, Buenos Aires, and London, October 31. (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820563–0810)

Discussion

A favorable vote will greatly help our relations with Argentina, which were strained nearly to the breaking point during the South Atlantic war last spring. The Argentine government, in fact, has made such a U.S. vote a *sine qua non* to improved relations. At the same time, Buenos Aires after extensive negotiations with us has softened considerably the original language of the resolution. (The text remains in flux;⁴ a copy will be provided once it becomes firm.)

Moreover, a supporting U.S. vote would also do much to improve relations with other Latin American Governments who felt, despite Argentina's aggression, that the U.S. reverted to form by favoring Europe over the Americas. Our vote would significantly help to dispel that suspicion—a development especially welcome on the eve of your visit to Latin America.

The British Government, Mrs. Thatcher in particular, will not welcome this U.S. vote despite the considerably softer tone of the resolution. Indeed, Mrs. Thatcher may telephone you in the next few days to register her concern as a follow-up to her message to you dated October 25 (Tab B).⁵

The newly worded resolution calls for negotiations, but does not set a date for their beginning nor does it prejudice the question of sovereignty. It thus falls well within our principle favoring peaceful resolutions of disputes.

I therefore concur with Secretary Shultz that we should support a moderately worded U.N. resolution on the Falkland Islands despite anticipated British objections.

Recommendations⁶

That you approve Secretary Shultz's recommendation favoring the upcoming Argentine-sponsored resolution on the Falkland Islands subject to final review of the text.

⁴ Kirkpatrick received a revised text, prepared by the representatives of Argentina, Peru, Brazil, Ecuador, Mexico, and Cuba, and forwarded it to Shultz, Eagleburger, Enders, Newell, and Clark in telegram 3152 from USUN, November 1. (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820565-0397)

⁵ Printed as Document 403.

⁶ Both recommendations were marked as approved. Below the second recommendation, McFarlane wrote: "Left with Pres 11/1." In telegram 306937 to USUN, November 2, the Department authorized Kirkpatrick to inform Aguirre Lanari, the Latin American co-sponsors, and others "as appropriate" that the United States was prepared to vote for the resolution as modified on October 30. (Department of State, Central Foreign Policy File, D820566-0031)

That you use the talking points attached at Tab A⁷ for your use in the event Prime Minister Thatcher calls you to discuss the question. (A reply⁸ to her message is being staffed separately.)

Tab C

Memorandum From Secretary of State Shultz to President Reagan⁹

Washington, October 30, 1982

SUBJECT

U.N. Falklands Resolution

Argentina and Great Britain have both been lobbying hard for our vote in the U.N. next week on the Falklands. The resolution, sponsored by 20 Latin American countries, asks both sides to try to resolve their dispute through negotiations. The resolution now has a comfortable majority. The British nevertheless have made it clear that they do not intend to negotiate in the near future. This has put Canada, Britain's EC partners and us on the spot. We want to support an ally who was the victim of aggression, but it is difficult, legally and politically, to vote against peaceful negotiations.

For many in Latin America, this vote is a key test of our future attitude toward them. Even an abstention would create great resentment in the area. We have been under heavy fire since the Falklands for "favoring Europe" over this Hemisphere. On the eve of your visit there, we want to demonstrate our deep interest in and solidarity with the Americas.

We have told Argentina and Britain that we would not support a resolution that prejudged the outcome of negotiations or set an unrealistic timetable. We also warned the Argentines that we could not support a resolution loaded with anti-colonialist rhetoric. The Argentine Foreign Minister has now agreed to our key demands. The Foreign Minister still has to sell the more moderate proposal to the military junta and the other Latin sponsors, but it is probably an acceptable package.

It is a close call, but I believe we should support the Argentine-sponsored resolution. There is no doubt Mrs. Thatcher will be dis-

⁷ Attached but not printed.

⁸ See Document 407.

⁹ Confidential.

pleased, but I do not think this will affect U.S./British cooperation in other areas, such as the pipeline sanctions question. We understand that Canada and most of the other EC countries now intend to take positions similar to ours.

RECOMMENDATION:

I recommend we inform the Argentines that we can support the resolution they sponsor, with the modifications to which the Argentine Foreign Minister agreed.¹⁰

¹⁰ The recommendation was neither approved nor disapproved.